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JOHN BROSchAK

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MR. BROSchAK: Good afternoon. My name is John Broschak and I am the dry fuel program manager for Consumers Energy in Michigan. My responsibilities include the fabrication, loading and operation of dry spent fuel casks for the Consumers Energy's nuclear facilities. This technology is very similar to that envisioned by the DOE as part of their spent fuel management program. And I guess my first point today is that I work directly with these materials. I don't do studies. I don't talk about it in public forums very often. I don't postulate. I work directly with the stuff, and I hope you can appreciate that as a unique perspective.

I'm thankful for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement spent fuel management issues, particularly transportation. I'm also thankful to live in a country where individuals and groups are free to express --

MR. BROWN: I appreciate your saving time, but if you can slow down just a bit for the court reporter.

MR. BROSchAK: Absolutely.

MR. BROWN: Thanks a lot.

MR. BROSchAK: I'm thankful to be in a country where people can express their views on important issues like this. I have spent my relatively short career involved in nearly all aspects of nuclear technology. I've operated nuclear power reactors on board submarines and safeguarded nuclear weapons in the defense of this great country. Over the past seven years, I've been involved with commercial nuclear power generation, and particularly with management of the used nuclear fuel produced as a byproduct of that power generation. I have personally directed and supervised the loading of 432 spent fuel assemblies into dry storage casks currently in operation at the Palisades Nuclear Plant, and therefore, I am intimately familiar with the expectations and standards of performance for spent fuel storage and transportation management.

My dad was a real simple and hard-working guy and interestingly enough, he was originally slated to attend Parks Air College here in the St. Louis area, but life had different callings for him. He had to return back to Pennsylvania to take care of ailing parents and he worked his way through night school in order to pursue his vocation of engineering. His primary goals in life were to instill solid values in his kids and provide for their higher education, and two of the values that my dad instilled in me as a young boy were the concepts of being responsible for my actions and always doing my best. These are two values that I would like to discuss in relation to the DEIS and spent fuel transportation.

1 | The federal government is clearly responsible for the management of the nation's spent nuclear fuel. The federal government mandated this delineation in 1983 and the courts have affirmed that responsibility on three separate occasions, and the responsibility, I think, is as it should be. I believe the DEIS clearly confirms the feasibility, logic and common sense of storing this type of waste in a central, engineered location rather than at many separate, temporary sites.

The cost issues alone are reason enough to support this conclusion, and can you imagine the cost and impact to this country if individuals had to be responsible on their own for their waste? It just doesn't make sense to me. | The other area of responsibility that I would like to address is the responsibility we have for our own actions. This country has benefited greatly from the power produced by nuclear generation, and whether you are for or against this power source, the waste exists.

It is irresponsible to not manage the safe and economical disposal of this waste. We owe this to our children and their children, just as the country is addressing issues like Social Security and federal debt and other important environmental issues. We need to be responsible for our prior actions.

- 2 Next, I would like to discuss the issue of doing your best. When it comes to spent fuel management, doing your best is not good enough. The consequences of error are just too severe, and I can tell you from direct experience that the Department of Transportation and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, those organizations directly overseeing nuclear waste storage and transportation, are demanding organizations that will not allow activities to occur if they do not meet prescribed requirements. The fact that nearly 3,000 spent fuel shipments have occurred over the past 30 years -- that's nearly one a day -- without significant incident, is testimony to the stringent oversight of the DOT and the NRC, and these numbers don't account for the thousands and thousands of low-level nuclear waste shipments that have occurred during the same time period and under similar requirements. Spent fuel transportation will be performed correctly and safely or it will not be performed at all, and that's from my experience.

- 3 I would like to touch on an issue that is often cited as a failure of spent fuel management performance and NRC oversight.

MR. BROWN: One minute remaining.

MR. BROSHAK: It is the issue of the flawed cask loaded and in operation at Palisades during my tenure. Although we found and reported the partial through wall flaw on a storage container, the NRC demanded that we demonstrate that the cask met all design conditions including the worst-case postulated accidents. We were able to demonstrate that it did, to the NRC's satisfaction, and the cask has been in operation cooling and shielding the spent fuel since 1994 with no abnormal radiation, contamination or any other performance issues.

If you don't believe my statements here, I invite anyone to come to Michigan to stand with me next to this flawed cask and observe for yourself the actual performance and review our historical record. The NRC demanded the cask meet requirements or it would not have been allowed to stay in operation. All future spent fuel storage and transportation activities must and will meet the same type of standards or they will not be allowed to occur.

In summary, my key points, in my opinion, I believe the DEIS confirms the feasibility, logic and common sense of depositing of this waste in a central engineered location. From my experience, spent fuel transportation activities will be conducted safely and in accordance with all other applicable requirements or the Department of Transportation and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission will not allow them to occur.

Finally, I believe we have a responsibility to ourselves and all future generations to take positive action to manage the nation's spent nuclear fuel in a safe and cost-effective manner. Obviously, there are many strongly in favor and strongly opposed to what the DOE is proposing. I encourage you to continue to express your opinion, particularly to our elected officials, since they will be the ones who determine the course of action for the nation. Whatever the outcome, I vow to all of you to continue to do my part to protect the health and safety of the public. Thank you.